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DAWES

THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF
A CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION

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*The Nature and Necessity of a Christian
Conversation.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

QUEEN

A T

Her Royal Chapel at St. James's,

On Sunday, November 19. 1704.

PHILIPPIANS i. 27.

The former part of the Verse.—*Only let your Conversation be, as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.*

By Sir WILLIAM DAWES, Baronet, D.D.
and Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

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PHILIPPIANS i. 27.

The former part of the Verse—*Only let your Conversation be, as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.*

S T. Paul having, in the foregoing part of this Chapter, mention'd his Bonds, which he was in at Rome, for the sake of the Gospel, at the time of his writing this Epistle; takes occasion from them to declare his readiness to *magnifie Christ in his Body, whether it should be by Life or by Death.* And the reason of this his readiness he tells us was, because he was sure to be a very great Gainer either way. If he should live on, he doubted not but he should likewise go on faithfully and industriously Preaching the Gospel, as he had done, and, by this means in promoting his Master's Honour, setting forward the Salvation of his Brethren, and, by so doing amplifying and enlarging, thro' GOD's Grace and Mercy, his own Reward in Heaven. *To me to live is Christ,* and if I live in the flesh, *this is the fruit of my labour.* If he should die, he was ready even then to comfort himself, with those blessed Expectations and Assurances which he had, that, as soon as ever he should be absent from the Body, he should be present with the Lord; and that there was laid up a Crown of Righteousness for him in Heaven. *To me to die is gain.* And, having such a glorious Prospect on both sides, he knows not what to wish for, yet what I shall chuse, I wot not, for I am in a strait betwixt two; on the one side, having a desire to depart, to get out of this troublesome World (troublesome to him to be sure, who had suffer'd so many dreadful things from it) and to be with Christ his dear lov'd Lord, in the present possession of his Joys, which was far better, infinitely most eligible for him, if he had regarded himself only; on the other side, being conscious to himself, that to abide in the Flesh, to continue in this life, was more needful for them his Flock at Philippy, who would be more likely to make an happy proficiency in the Faith of Christ, and to draw near to perfection in it, under him their Spiritual Father and Guide, than any other. And this consideration it is which turns the Scale, and determineth the choice of our most charitable Apostle (that true lover of Souls indeed, that true Pattern of a Pastoral Affection and concern for the Flock of Christ, who for their sakes, could be contented to put off the

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taking possession, even of Paradise it self, for some time) and even begets in him a firm persuasion that for this reason, GOD would be pleas'd to grant him a longer continuance among them: For this I take to be the sense of the words which follow. *And having this confidence, that to abide in the Flesh is more needful for you ; I know, or am verily persuaded, that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of Faith.* However, be this as it would, and as it should please GOD, to whom he entirely left it ; yet one thing he tells them, he must not forget to put them in mind of, a thing of the highest moment and importance, a thing of absolute necessity towards their eternal welfare. Nay indeed the very one thing needful (a better Lesson he could not possibly teach them if he were present with them ; a better Legacy he could not possibly bequeath to them, if he was never to see them any more) *Only let your Conversation, the whole management and conduct of your Lives, be as become, or is agreeable to the Gospel of Christ.*

And as the Apostle's very earnest manner, in which he recommends this thing to us in my Text, is an Argument of the very great weight and stress which he presseth it in some other of his Epistles, is an evident proof, of the same. As, in that to the *Ephesians* iv. 1. *I beseech ye that you walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith ye are called.* In that to the *Colossians* i. 9, 10. *We do not cease to pray for you, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.* And in the Second to the *Thessalonians* ii. 11, 12. *You know how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you (as a Father doth his Children) that ye would walk worthy of GOD, who hath called you unto his Kingdom and Glory.*

That therefore we may be sure rightly to understand, and faithfully to follow, this important Advice, I shall in my following Discourse endeavour to shew you.

I. When we may be truly said to have our *Conversation* become the Gospel of Christ.

II. What strict Obligations we lie under to use our utmost care so to have our Conversation.

I. When we may be truly said to have our *Conversation*, become the Gospel of Christ. And the general Answer to the Question is very easie, viz. That then this may be truly said,

us, when we lead such lives, as the Gospel of Christ requires that we should lead; such lives as are suitable to those pure and refined Precepts, those noble and illustrious Examples, those powerful and all conquering Assistances, those glorious and encouraging Rewards, which are there set before us, and offer'd to us. But, because general answers are apt to have but very little effect, I add therefore more particularly, that this may then, and only then, truly be said of us, When

1st. We use our utmost Care, Pains and Diligence, to perform and to avoid every such thing, as GOD has, any where, commanded us to perform or to avoid. And,

2^{dly}, Do all this, in the simplicity and sincerity of our Hearts, upon true Christian Principles, and with the entire concurrence of our Minds, Wills, and Affections. And,

3^{dly}, Do it all, to the utmost perfection that we are capable of, in full proportion to our Endowments and Abilities, and with an hearty desire and endeavour to grow and improve, every Day more and more, in the knowledge and practice of our Duty. And,

4^{thly}, Are constant and persevere in doing this, throughout the whole course of our Lives; or, at least, if at any time we happen to slip or fall, do all that we can to rise again, and recover our selves, by a timely, sincere and effectual Repentance. And,

Lastly, After all our best endeavours to perform our Duty, after all our best performances of it, ascribe the Praise and Glory of them all to GOD, and entirely rely upon his free Grace Goodness in Christ Jesus; and not in the least upon our own Merit, for his acceptance and rewarding of them.

1st. When we use our utmost Care, Pains, and Diligence to perform and to avoid every such thing, as GOD has, any where, commanded us to perform or to avoid.

I said, our utmost Care, Pains and Diligence, because the state of a Christian, in this Life, is constantly represented in Scripture, as a state of great and continual danger and temptation; a state of War, of Fighting and Wrestling, not only against our own Lusts and Passions, against the Charms and Allurements, the Customs and Fashions of a wicked World, and our own corrupt Nature, which always

takes part with them (which we cannot but know and feel to be formidable Enemies enough) but against *Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of the World, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places*; and consequently a State where we have need to exert all our Strength, use all our Prudence and Caution, be continually upon our Guard, and summon all our Forces together, for our defence, security and preservation. And hence it is, that we are so often exhorted to *take heed, to watch, to be circumspect, to be sober, to be vigilant, to use all diligence, to labour, to strive, to fight, to resist, to resist unto Blood, &c.* From all which it is plain, that those can never pretend to have their Conversation *as becometh the Gospel of Christ*, who will be at none or very little thought or pains for the Service of GOD, and the Salvation of their Souls; much less can they, who by their negligence and carelessness, their laziness and idleness, lay themselves open to their Enemies, and even invite the World, the Flesh and the Devil, to make their assaults upon them, and carry them away captive at their pleasure.

Again, I say, every such thing as GOD hath commanded, because it is plain from Scripture, that *whosoever shall break one of the least of GOD's Commandments, shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven*, that is, shall have no part there at all; and that *whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all*. So that according to the terms of the Gospel, the very single wilful habit of any one plain Sin, as Whoring, Drinking, Swearing, &c. will be sufficient to Damn a Man, even tho' in other respects he may keep the Law, nay, and perhaps have some very commendable Qualities into the bargain; a thing which I heartily wish all who call themselves by the Name of Christ, would seriously consider.

Lastly, I say, as GOD has any where commanded because GOD has us'd different ways of making known his Will to Mankind, all which we are oblig'd to attend to and comply with. The Gospel indeed, is the last and most perfect manifestation of GOD's Will to Man, but doth by no means abolish, and render wholly useless, those which he had before. Reason, tho' it doth not shine by much so bright and clear as Revelation, yet continues still to give us a very good and useful Light, which we must take great care how we despise or neglect, and tho' all the Commandments of

the Old Testament do not now oblige us, as they did the *Jews*, to whom many of them were peculiar: Yet all the Moral Precepts of it, which have an eternal foundation in Reason, and the Nature of things, and which consequently all Men are like concern'd in, are still, and everlastingly will be, in as good force as ever. And therefore these our Lord expressly tells us he came not to *destroy*, but to *fulfil*. So that when any thing plainly appears to us, from the meer light of Reason, or the Old Testament, to be our Duty, we are not with some simple People, to question its Authority, and despise it, as carnal, and out of date, purely because it may happen not to be particularly and distinctly mentioned in the Gospel (for perhaps for this very reason, some Duties were there omitted, or at least not so fully and explicitly mention'd, because they were very plain before, from Reason or the Old Testament) but we are to look upon it to be as truly the Will of GOD as the Gospel it self and to obey it accordingly.

2^{dly}, When we do all this in the simplicity and sincerity of our Hearts, upon true Christian Principles, and with the entire concurrence of our Minds, Wills, and Affections. It is not enough to perform the Duties of the Christian Religion, as the *Pharisees* did those of the Law, only to be seen of Men, and to court their approbation and applause, to please our Superiors, to establish a Reputation, and make our selves popular, to feed our Vanity and Ostentation, or to serve some other such Worldly design or interest: no, they who are Religious only from such Principles, serve not GOD, but themselves, and we are assured, must expect their reward from Men only, but shall have none from their Father which is in Heaven. But the good Christian must act upon much higher and nobler Principles such as the Scripture proposeth to us: A fear of the Punishments, and hope of the rewards of a future State; an unfeigned love of his Brethren, and concern for their welfare in all things, more especially Spiritual; a deep and humble sense of GOD's Supreme Authority over all Mankind, of his infinite Wisdom and Goodness in his Government of them, and of his unspeakable Condescension and Loving-kindness, in sending his Son Christ Jesus to seek and to save them; and above all, a most ardent love of him and our Blessed Saviour, and an earnest desire to become like them, and to please them

them, and to promote their Honour and Glory all over the World.

Neither will a bare external Worship of GOD and performance of Religious Duties, serve a Christian's turn; but he must be careful to *obey from the Heart*, to *Worship in Spirit and in Truth*, to be *renew'd in the Spirit of his Mind*, to *glorifie GOD in his Spirit*, or Mind, and to be holy in that, as well as in *Body*. His inward Man must always go along with his outward: He must not only come to the publick Worship of GOD, but he must have his thoughts and affections fix'd upon the business which he is there employ'd in: He must not only Pray, but Pray with zeal and fervency, not only hear the Word, but hear it with reverence and attention; not only receive the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, but receive it with Repentance, Faith and Charity. He must love his Brother, not in Word and in Tongue only, but in Deed and in Truth; and, as to himself, he must be pure in Heart, in his very inmost Thoughts and Desires, as well as in his outward Actions, or he will never see GOD. In fine, whatever he doth, he must do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not as unto Men, knowing that of the Lord he shall receive his Reward.

3dly, When we do all this to the utmost perfection that we are capable of, in full proportion to our Endowments and Abilities, and with an hearty desire and endeavour to grow and improve every Day more and more in the knowledge and practice of our Duty. The Christian Religion doth not content it self only with our doing no Evil, but with our abstaining from all appearance of it, every thing that may look like the least approach towards it; not barely with our becoming good, but with our approving or trying things that are excellent, and becoming, as far as we are able, perfect; perfect to the very highest degree, even *as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect*. It requires us, as to do good, so to be rich in good Works, to be fruitful in every sort of them, and according to the several Talents which we have received, to give GOD his own again with Usury; as not to be unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ, not to make vain the Grace of GOD: So to grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to abound more and more, and to be daily adding one Grace and Vertue to another, that

that so at last we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

And happy, happy would it be for us, if, according to these Rules, we would be careful (not to draw as near as we can possibly suppose, with the utmost stretch of the Law, we lawfully may to the Borders of Sin, which is the pitiful and unchristian Policy of some Men, and has ruin'd its Thousands and its Ten Thousands: But) like true Christians, true Haters and Abhorrrers of Sin, to keep our selves aloof, at a mighty distance from it. If, whatever we do in a Religious way, we would do it with all our might, and be so far from thinking our selves good enough, as to be always aspiring and endeavouring after higher degrees of Goodness and Perfection. If those who are Rich and Great among us, would distinguish themselves by the extraordinary good which they do; by becoming illustrious Examples of Piety and Vertue, by being ready to distribute, and willing to communicate out of their Abundance, and by using all their Power and Authority, for the Punishment of Evil doers, and for the Praise of them that do well. And if all of us, from the highest to the lowest, would in our respective Stations, and in proportion to our several Abilities, do all that in us lieth, for the promoting the Interest of Religion, the Honour of God, and the true Happiness of Mankind. Always remembring that we serve a Master, who expects to Reap where he hath Sown, and who, *where he hath given much, will require the more.*

One thing more I would willingly add under this Head, and that is, that as we are to improve in our performance of Religious Duties, so ought we likewise to improve in the Principles upon which we perform them. The Terror of the Lord, or a respect to recompence of Reward, are most commonly, and undoubtedly lawfully may be (else the Scriptures would never have propos'd them as such) the first Motives or Principles upon which Men are persuaded to become Religious. But then a sense of God's goodness and infinite Perfection, and entire Love of him and our Blessed Saviour, and a zealous desire to have their Honour and Glory advanc'd to the utmost, must afterwards take place in our Hearts, and crown our Righteousness. These are the noblest and most generous Principles of Religion, as having least of our selves, and most of God in them, and therefore these we may be sure will be most acceptable to God. And accordingly we find

find, that these were the chief Principles upon which the Apostles, and Disciples, and first Christians, and, which is more than all these, our Blessed Lord himself acted.

4thly, When we are constant, and persevere in doing this thro' the whole Course of our Lives ; or, at least, if at any time we happen to slip or fall, do all we can to rise again, and recover our selves by a timely, sincere and effectual Repentance. The Conversation of a Christian is not to be made up of sudden Heats and Fits of Religion frequently interrupted, and sometimes wholly laid asleep for a very long time ; nay, and too often chang'd into the Heats and Fits of a quite contrary Nature. He is not to Pray one Hour, and Swear the next ; To come to Church on the Lord's Day Morning, and sit in for Drinking and Gaming in the Afternoon : To give Alms to Day, and oppress to morrow : To have a week of Retirement, and another of Debauchery ; but he is to be all of a piece, and to carry on an even and steady course of Vertue throughout all the several Stages, and in all the several instances of his whole Life. He is to be Holy, as far as he is able, as God is Holy, that is, to be sure, with a little a Mixture of Sin and Imperfections, as is possible to Man : He is to *serve God in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of his Life* : as soon as he *names the name of Christ*, he is to depart from all iniquity, and he is to continue faithful unto Death, that he may obtain a Crown of Life. This is to be his first Aim, this he is sincerely to design and labour after.

But, because God foresaw that unhappy Man would be too apt to fall of this continued Righteousness, he has therefore out of his infinite Mercy and Compassion towards us Secondly and by way of Recovery only, left open a place for Repentance, that is for our return to him, after we have gone astray, by an hearty Sorrow for our Sins past, and a thorough change and amendment of our whole Conversation for the future. Never in the least intending that Men should from hence take occasion wilfully and deliberately to enter into a course of Sin, purely upon the prospect and encouragement of the Privilege of Repenting afterwards, no (no, this is a most notorious Abuse of God's Mercy, and Sinners had best take care that they do not too far provoke God by it) but chiefly that the surpriz'd and unwary, the thoughtless and unconsidering Sinners, the Sinners who have not

not offended so very presumptuously, and with such an high-and, might find shelter from Divine Vengeance in this *City of Refuge*. Provided always that they Repent in Time, before they are frighten'd into it by old Age, Sicknes, or a Death-bed, (for of these the Case is very doubtful, because their Repentance seems to proceed rather from an entire Regard to themselves, than any Respect to God and his Glory: And if so, they have great Reason to doubt whether God will accept it) as also that they Repent sincerely, not only to serve a present Turn, till they have recover'd this fit of Sicknes, that Trouble or Affliction, &c. which God knows, is too commonly the Case; but with a full purpose to serve God, and to live to him all the remainder of their Lives; and lastly, that they do it effectually, so as to *bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance*, a constant Succession of good Works for a considerable time, which alone can evidence the *Sincerity* and *Efficacy* of their Repentance.

Lastly, When after all our best Endeavours to do our Duty, all our best Performances of it, we ascribe the Praise and Glory of them all to God, and entirely rely upon his Free Grace and Goodness in Christ Jesus, and not in the least upon our own Merits, for his acceptance and rewarding of them: For what says the Scripture? *When you shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable Servants; we have done that which was our Duty to do.* And with great reason sure; since it is God that *worketh in us, both to will and to do, according to his good Pleasure*; since we are not sufficient of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God, and it is he that makes us perfect in every good Work, to do his Will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, thro' Jesus Christ: And, as to our Reward, we know who hath told us that it is not of Debt, but of Grace, and that by Grace we are saved, thro' Faith, and that not of our selves, it is the Gift of God; that we are accepted, not for our own sakes, but in the Beloved, and, being justified by his Grace, are made Heirs according to the hope of eternal Life.

You see then that the having our Conversation as becometh the Gospel of Christ, comprehendeth in it a vast deal; even all that Care, Pains and Diligence, all that universal Regard to God's Commandments; all that Sincerity and Simplicity, both in Principles and Practice; all that zealous aim at, and endeavour after

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Perfection, that *abounding in good Works*, that *just use and improvement* of our respective Talents ; all that *Constancy and Perseverance* in doing good ; all that *Seasonableness, Heartiness, and Fruitfulness* in our Repentance ; and *Lastly*, all that *Humble-Mindedness and Self denial*, of ascribing all the Praise of our best Endeavours and Performances to G O D, and relying wholly upon his Goodness, in *Christ Jesus*, for the Acceptance and Rewarding of them, which are so often requir'd of Christians in Scripture.

And now perhaps, you will be apt to say, *Who is sufficient for all these things?* I answer, every Christian (generally speaking) that is but as willing, as he will be made able : For tho' it is true indeed, that of our selves we are *weak and unable to do any good thing*, much less all these good things : Yet at the same time it must be consider'd, that we are *strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might* that his *Grace will be sufficient for us*, his *Strength made perfect in our Weakness*, and that we *shall be enabled to do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth us*. And upon these Grounds we may be confident, with *St. Paul*, that G O D, who hath begun a good Work in us, will also perfect it, even, until, and in the Day of *Jesus Christ's* coming to Judgment.

Let us then, without any more delays or excuses, diligently attend to this important, this great, this necessary Work ; a Work, without doing of which, we can never be easie in our Minds here, never be happy hereafter : As will most plainly appear, as soon as I shall have laid before you,

II. The strict Obligations which we lie under *thus to have our Conversation*. And surely these Obligations must needs be very strict, since they bind us with all the force that our Reason, our Gratitude, our Justice, and our Interest, can give them.

1st. Our Reason, which, besides that it will tell us, in the general, that all G O D's Commands are to be obey'd by us, and must necessarily be agreeable to the highest reason, from which it is impossible for G O D, in the least, to swerve so will it more particularly assure us, in respect of our *Christian Conversation*, that it is the Conversation of a Man, of a reasonable Creature, most highly perfective of a rational Nature, and directly tending to make us, in a very great degree, like to G O D himself, the Supream Pattern of all Reason and Perfection. And that the restraints, which the Gospel lay upon us,

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are no more than are necessary, for the bringing under Subjection our sensual Lusts and Appetites, which would otherwise be an intolerable Shame and Reproach to us; no more than are necessary to keep us from *setting our Affections* too much upon *this World and the things of it*, and to prepare and dispose us for the enjoyment of another Life, infinitely more agreeable to a rational Nature, than this, for ever and ever. And what then, in the Name of Reason, hath any Man to object against this? Will he call himself a Man, and will he not live like one? Would he be admir'd for his Reason, and yet himself disregard and despise it? When G O D hath made him of one of the noblest and uppermost Ranks of Beings, would he degrade himself, and make himself more Vile, even *that the Beasts that perish*? No, I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of G O D, *that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to G O D, which is your reasonable Service.*

2dly, Our *Gratitude*; in the Words of St Paul, which I just now mention'd, you find the Mercies of God urged as an Argument to persuade Men to lead *Holy* and truly *Christian* Lives. And surely they must needs appear to be a very strong and powerful one, for this purpose, to any Man that seriously considers how numberless and unspeakably great they have been towards us. After all that God has done for us, in our Creation, Preservation, and, above all, our *Redemption*, by the Death and Passion of his only begotten, and most dearly beloved Son, whom he spared not, but deliver'd up for us all. After all this, we must have Hearts harder than Adamant, if we are not affected with a most *tender, deep, and lasting* Sense of this his Love towards us, and this Sense of his infinite Love and Kindness towards us, cannot but beget in us a most ardent and intense Love towards him; and, naturally consequent upon this, a most earnest desire to make him all the returns of Love that we can, by studying to please him in all things, to do his Will before our own, and to keep his Commandments, whatsoever it may cost us.

3dly, Our *Justice*, which, as it doth exact from us an universal Obedience to all God's Commandments, as a most *just Debt* from all his Creatures to him; so doth it more especially require at our hands a performance of all those solemn Vows and Promises, by which we have, over and over, engag'd our selves, to have our *Conversation as becometh the Gospel of Christ*.

Christ. As in our *Baptism*, our *Confirmation*, our *Communion*, in the *Body and Blood of Christ*, our ordinary *Prayers*, *Publick* and *Private*, and more particularly those which we have offer'd up to God in the *Day of Sickness* and *Adversity*, and at the time of publick *Sorrow* and *Humiliation* for Sin. And can we possibly be so foolish as to think that all these *Vows* and *Promises* will stand for nothing? Is it so very heinous and foul a Crime to *Lye* to Man, and is it none at all to *Lye* to God, and to the *Holy Ghost*? Can we be so ready to call one another to account for *Breach of Promise*, and judge it a necessary piece of Honour so to do; And can we be so *stupid* as to believe, that God alone is regardless of his Honour, and takes no notice whether Men make good their *Vows* to him or no? No, let us not deceive our selves; there is not one of all these *Vows* and *Promises*, but what is noted in *God's Book*; not one that we shall not be call'd to a *strict Account* for at the *Last Day*. God is infinitely more jealous of his Honour, and hath infinitely more reason than we can possibly be of ours; and therefore we may assure our selves, that he will not be mocked by us, but, as we have pretended to him a readiness to will, so he will expect from us, at our utmost Peril, a Performance also.

Lastly, Our *Interest*: And what is there that we can possibly think of under this Head, that doth not powerfully plead for such a *Conversation as becometh the Gospel of Christ*; What is there that we can in reason wish for or desire, that this is not the most ready and likely way to obtain for us?

Do we desire the outward Enjoyments of this World, Riches, Honour, Power, &c. what way so likely to obtain these, as by the Goodness of our Lives, to engage God on our side, who is the *Giver* of them all? Nay, and to engage Men too, who will hereby be invited more than by any other thing whatsoever, to Love us, to Respect us, to Trust us, to Serve us, to Rejoyce in our Prosperity and Advancement, and to Help towards it all they can.

Or do we, like wiser Men, desire those inward Enjoyments of Contentment of Mind, of Fearlessness of Dangers, Afflictions, Sickness, nay, even Death it self, of a chearful and merry Heart, of a Mind undisturb'd by Lusts and Passions, of Peace of Conscience, and that yet more desirable peace of God, which passeth all Understanding? Where, I beseech you, are all these to be found, but in the Life of a good Christian? Where,

Where, but in the Religion of him, who both had them all himself in the highest degree, and had Power to bestow them on whomsoever he should please, and as actually promis'd them to all his faithful Followers and Disciples.

To say all at once, do we desire to avoid everlasting Misery, and to obtain everlasting Happiness? There is but one way of doing this, and that is, by becoming *holy in all manner of Conversation, by perfecting Holiness in the fear of God*, and so rendering our selves meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.

There will come a Day, believe me there will (but why do I say believe me? Believe your own Reason and Consciences, believe the *Wise* and *Holiest* of Men or Angels, nay, even but believe God himself, who cannot possibly deceive you) when GOD shall judge the *World in Righteousness*, and give to every Man according to his Deeds; to them, *who, by patient continuance in well-doing, have sought for Glory, Honour, Immortality, and Eternal Life*: But to them *who have been Contentious, and have not obeyed the Truth, but obeyed Unrighteousness, Indignation, and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish upon every Soul of them*: A Day, when the Blessed Saviour of the World will no longer appear to be that mean and inconsiderable Person, that some Men would now make of him, but shall be revealed from Heaven, with his holy Angels, in flaming Fire; taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and obeyed not his Gospel: A Day of Darkness and Gloominess, of Wrath and fierce Anger, of Horror and Amazement: When Sinners shall be afraid, and the Hypocrites shall be surpriz'd with fearfulness: When the boldest and most daring Sinner that ever lived, shall Sneak and Crouch, shall Weep and Wail, shall be confounded and hang down his Head, and be ready to give Ten thousand Worlds if he could be worth them, for so much as one smile or glimpse of Mercy, from the once neglected and despised Jesus: A Day, when there shall be respect of Persons of God; but the *Kings of the Earth, and the great Men, and the rich Men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty Men, and the free Man as well as the bond Man, shall hide themselves in the Dens, and in the Rocks of the Mountains, and shall cry to the Mountains and Rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb*; for the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?

Be wise now therefore, O my Brethren; more especially, be instructed, ye that are Princes and Judges of the Earth; Ye, into whose Hands GOD has put such vast Powers and Opportunities of being and doing Good: Ye, who have such large Accounts to make out at the Day of Judgment: Ye, who fall, from the height of Temporal Grandeur and Prosperity, into the lowest Abyss of Eternal Wretchedness and Misery, will make your Case, if you should miscarry, much more intolerable than that of other Men. O that ye would be persuaded to serve the Lord with fear, and to rejoyce unto him with reverence: That ye would Kiss the Son, sincerely and entirely obey him, lest he be Angry, and so ye Perish from the right way: For, if his Wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, much more if it be kindled to that great Degree, to which it most certainly will be at the great and terrible Day of Wrath: Blessed, yea for ever Blessed, shall all those be, that put their Trust in Him.

F I N I S.
